

# California Department of Veterans Affairs



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS \$8.5 MILLION TO CALIFORNIA FOR STATE VETERANS CEMETERY**

**SACRAMENTO – September 16, 2004** – As a demonstration of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's commitment in securing federal funds for California, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tom Johnson announced today that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Cemetery Grants Program has awarded California a grant for \$8.5 million for construction of the Northern California State Veterans Cemetery in Shasta County. This grant will cover 100 percent of the total allowable costs associated with the design, equipping, and construction of the cemetery.

"This award of \$8.5 million in federal funds demonstrates President Bush's and Governor Schwarzenegger's commitment to California veterans and veterans projects," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tom Johnson.

"Governor Schwarzenegger and I are very proud that Northern California veterans will now have the choice of being buried much closer to their families. These men and women deserve nothing less than the best, even after they no longer are with us, for we are grateful they bravely answered our nation's call to duty."

The Northern California State Veterans Cemetery will be located on land donated to the state near the community of Igo, in Shasta County. The Cemetery is a shared project between the USDVA, which has now provided the funds for construction, and California, which will own and operate the cemetery. While the State will provide the overall management of the cemetery, Shasta County will cooperate in maintaining the cemetery by providing some funding and in-kind labor.

When completed by Veterans Day 2005, the Northern California State Veterans Cemetery will offer veterans and their eligible spouses and dependents five types of burials. These will include traditional in-ground, pre-cast vault, in-ground cremated remains, columbarium crypt, and a scatter garden for cremated remains. The USDVA will pay for interment costs for eligible veterans, inclusive of headstones, but all other costs associated with burials, such as funeral expenses, will be the responsibility of the veteran or the veteran's family. Funeral homes will be able to assist with these arrangements. For a complete description of burial benefits offered to veterans, please refer to the USDVA website at [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov) or call 1-800-827-1000.

The USDVA's National Cemetery Administration is also in the process of establishing a new national veterans cemetery near Dixon, California. According to Anthony J. Principi, Secretary for the USDVA, the acquisition of the land for that cemetery is progressing well and construction funding for the first phase of the Dixon cemetery is included in the president's budget for fiscal year 2005.